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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

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Smaller Total Acreage Than Last Year But Spring-Sown Acreage May Be Large

Based on farmers' present intentions, acreage of spring-sown crops will be relatively large. Increase (17 crops, including hay, for which prospective acreages are estimated) is from 274.2 million acres in '49 to 277.9 millions this season. But when the reduced acreage of winter wheat, seeded last fall, is considered, the total planted acreage will be less than last year's total. Principal crops planted or grown in 1950 may total nearly 359 million acres--about 10½ million acres less than last year, also less than in '48, '44, and '43. Back in '30-'33, there was a peak period when acreages ranged from 369.5 to 375.5 million acres.

Corn and Spring Wheat Acreage Down

Large declines from last year are indicated in the corn and spring wheat acreages; smaller declines in acreages of peanuts, dry beans, rice, potatoes and tobacco. All are crops for which acreage allotments will be in effect this year. Declines are expected also in the acreage of flax and dry peas.

Increases for Oats, Barley, and Other Acreages

Increases are indicated in the acreage of such other crops as oats, barley, soybeans, sorghums, hay, sugar beets, sweetpotatoes, and cowpeas. The acreage actually planted may turn out larger or smaller than indicated by farmers' present intentions. Weather will be an important factor in the way intentions are carried out. In some cases, farmers may see fit to change their acreage plans as a result of information gained from the intentions report. Acreage allotments may also bring about changes. For cotton and peanuts legislation is still pending which may permit increased acreages. (Cotton Acreage Report will be issued July 10.)

1950 Prospective Acreages Compared with 1949

Corn, all	82,765,000 acres	DOWN 6 percent
All spring wheat	19,727,000 "	DOWN 13 percent
Oats	47,964,000 "	UP 8 percent
Barley	13,879,000 "	UP 24 percent
Flaxseed	4,027,000 "	DOWN 22 percent
Rice	1,645,000 "	DOWN 10 percent
Sorghums	14,568,000 "	UP 24 percent
Potatoes	1,862,000 "	DOWN 3 percent
Sweetpotatoes	603,000 "	UP 10 percent
Tobacco 1/	1,582,000 "	DOWN 3 percent
Beans, dry edible	1,678,000 "	DOWN 12 percent
Peas, dry field	281,000 "	DOWN 23 percent
Soybeans 2/	13,500,000 "	UP 18 percent
Cowpeas 2/	1,192,000 "	UP 1 percent
Peanuts 2/	2,570,000 "	DOWN 12 percent
Hay 1/	75,091,000 "	UP 3 percent
Sugar beets	980,000 "	UP 27 percent

1/ Acreage harvested.

2/ Grown alone for all purposes.

All Wheat Cut By About 12 Million Acres

The 53 million acres of winter wheat already planted plus the 19.7 million acres of spring wheat expected to be planted totals 72.8 million acres. This is a little below the national allotment for all wheat and compares with the 84.9 million acres planted last year.

Four Million Acre Increase in Feed Grain Crops

Increases of nearly 3½ million acres of oats, over 2½ million acres of barley, and nearly 3 million acres of sorghum together with the 5-million acre decrease in corn acreage means that about 4 million acres more feed grains may be planted than in '49.

Smaller Tonnage Expected From Increased Acreage

An increase in feed grain production is not expected because the acreage increases are in crops which produce low per-acre yields compared with corn, also because most of the corn acreage cut is in the high-yielding Corn Belt. Based on average yields (1944-48) prospective feed grain acreage would produce 113½ million tons, or 10 percent less than the 126 million tons in '49.

Hay Increased by 2 Million Acres

Some 2-1/4 million acres more hay is expected to be planted than in '49. This will absorb some of the acreage adjustments in other crops and will provide for increased numbers of hay consuming livestock.

Reduction in Food Grain Acreage

A decline in food grain acreage is in prospect. Winter wheat reduced 15 percent from last year; spring wheat down 13 percent. Rice acreage appears to be down over 10 percent; rye, sown last fall, up 12 percent.

Indicated Wheat Acreage Might Produce 1.2 Billion Bushels

Based on average yields in 1944-48, wheat production this year would total 1,185 million bushels compared with 1,146 million bushels in '49. (Allotment acreages were originally designed to obtain production of 1,125 million bushels, but were later liberalized.)

Acreage in Oil Crops--Some Up, Some Down

Among the oilseeds, an acreage increase is noted only for soybeans. Increase is 18 percent. Flax acreage will decline by 1.2 million acres or 22 percent; peanuts by 359 thousand acres or about 12 percent.

Farming Progress About Normal

In terms of plant growth and spring work, progress on farms is normal to advanced in nearly all parts of the country. But severe weather in late February and early March offset earlier advancement somewhat. Winter wheat, which had little snow cover except in the Pacific Northwest, had emerged from dormancy relatively early. Western irrigation water promising in all but the southern mountain areas.

Big Stocks of Potatoes on Hand

March 1 stocks of merchantable potatoes held by growers and local merchants were the largest of record for that date. The 87.7 million bushels on hand were 24 percent more than stocks on hand a year ago and 17 percent above previous record on hand in March '47.

Hops Available Down From Last Year

Stocks of U. S. hops available for sale or use totaled 47.8 million pounds on March 1. This compares with 53.3 million pounds March 1 last year and about 47.8 million pounds two years ago. (Does not include 4.9 million pounds, in growers' hands, not available for sale under the Hop Control Board Regulations.)

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED			
COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Jan. 15 1950	Feb. 15 1950	Feb. 15 1950
Wheat, bu.dol.	1.92	1.93	2.13
Corn, bu.dol.	1.15	1.16	1.55
Peanuts, lb. ct.	10.5	10.6	11.6
Cotton, lb. ct.	26.47	27.50	29.88
Potatoes, bu.dol.	1.36	1.33	1.67
Hogs, 100 lb.dol.	15.10	16.60	18.60
Beef cattle, 100 lb.dol.	19.40	20.40	16.80
Veal calves, 100 lb.dol.	23.30	24.60	18.90
Lambs, 100 lb.dol.	21.60	22.80	18.60
Butterfat, lb. ct.	1/ 60.2	1/ 61.6	68.7
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb.dol.	1/ 3.83	1/2/ 3.85	4.29
Chickens, live, lb. ct.	20.3	21.8	28.3
Eggs, doz. ct.	1/ 30.4	1/ 32.5	49.2
1/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.			
2/ Preliminary.			

Tangerines a Record Crop

The tangerine crop of 4.9 million boxes is a record, up from last year by 11 percent. Production last year, 4.4 million; average, 3.5 million. Cannery have used many small tangerines ordinarily left on the trees. About 1.4 million boxes processed by March 1 compared with 1 million last year. Harvest about completed.

Orange Crop Up 9 Percent From Average

Orange crop ('49-50) is estimated at 101.7 million boxes, up 2 percent from last season and 9 percent more than average. About 2 million more boxes are available for use than year ago. March 1 last season 56 million boxes were on hand; same date this season, 58 million. About half of this year's crop has been processed compared with only 38 percent processed last year.

Grapefruit Production Down

U. S. grapefruit production is down from last year by about 19 percent and down from average by 27 percent. Estimate is 37.1 million boxes compared with 45.5 million last year and 50.5 million average. However, grapefruit remaining for use March 1 was down from last year by only about 1 million boxes. About 14 million boxes remained this year compared with 15 million last year.

Record Milk Production

Milk production in February was up 3 percent from year earlier and was 6 percent above 10-year average for the month. The 8.7 billion pounds of milk produced in February exceeded the previous February record of 1944 by 96 million gallons. Average production has been 8.1 billion gallons. Milk per cow was a record for the month and cow numbers were up 1 percent.

Milk Prices Down Slightly From Last Year

Slightly lower prices for milk are noted, both at producer and retail levels, in most sections of the country, (New England and East South Central areas excepted). Standard milk delivered to homes in 24 cities, early March averaged 19.8 cents quart retail --down about two-tenths of a cent from early February and down nearly a cent from early March last year. Price now averages three cents a quart or 18 percent higher than the '44-48 price in March.

Eggs Produced Up 22 Percent From Average

Eggs laid in February totaled 8 percent more than in February last year and 22 percent more than the '39-48 average. The 5.2 billion eggs compare with 4.8 billion laid year earlier and the 4.3 billion average for the month. Hens averaged 13.2 eggs each, record high for the month. Compares with 13 same month last year and 11.2 February average. Numbers of layers were up from last year in all parts of the country. The nearly 394 million layers were 6 percent more than in February last year and 4 percent above the average.

Farmers Get About 30 Cents For Eggs

Farmers got 29.6 cents average for eggs mid-February compared with 31.3 cents mid-January and 41.8 cents in February year ago.

Chickens Average About 22 Cents Pound

Farmers averaged 21.8 cents pound for live chickens in mid-February. This compares with 20.3 cents in January and 29.5 cents in February last year. Supplies plentiful, demand active.

Turkey Prices Down From Year Ago

Turkeys brought farmers 31.6 cents pound live weight in February compared with 44.1 cents year earlier. Receipts of fresh-killed stock declined; offerings of frozen stock plentiful. Storage stocks, 137 million pounds compared with 55 million pounds February last year and a 5-year average of 97 million pounds.

Feeding Less Favorable Than Last Year

Prices for eggs, chickens and turkeys were less favorable than a year ago when compared with feed costs. Poultry feed at mid-February cost \$3.35, compared with \$3.44 in February last year.

Spring Lambs Show an Increase

Early lamb crop is estimated to be 2 percent larger than last year. Increase is first in 9 years. But the lamb crop is still well below 10-year average.

Seed Sales Heavy

Sales of 6 important field seeds from last year's crops--alfalfa, red clover, alsike, sweet clover, timothy, and lespedeza--are estimated to exceed sales from the '48 crops by 12 percent and to top average sales by 4 percent. Total production is about 423.6 million pounds. Farmers have sold 332 million pounds and will keep the remaining 91.6 million pounds for their own use.

Farmers' Receipts Up From February

Farmers' cash receipts in March are indicated at 1.7 billion dollars, up 7 percent from February total but down 9 percent from year ago. Volume of marketings up from seasonal low in February and about same as the volume in March last year. March receipts from livestock and products--about 1.2 billion dollars--will show a gain over February of about 15 percent though down a little from March of last year. Receipts from crops--about .5 billion dollars--will be down a little from February and down 15 percent from March a year ago.

Receipts First Quarter Down Only 5 Percent

First quarter's cash receipts to farmers--estimated at 5.6 billion dollars--will be about 5 percent less than in first quarter last year. Livestock receipts are 3.4 billion dollars this quarter; crop receipts, 2.2 billions. Drop in receipts not large when change in dollar value is considered. Dollar is now worth more than a year ago.

Business Outlook Favorable

Economic activity in January and February held close to the high level to which it had recovered in late '49. Industrial production was higher in January than in December, though cut back a little in February because of slow down in coal and autos. Construction declined less than seasonally from December and remained well above the level of January '49. Value of new construction in January, at 1.5 billion dollars, was up from year earlier by 16 percent. Consumer income is high and will be further augmented by veterans' insurance refunds.

Demand for Farm Products Generally Steady

Demand for farm products remains at about the same level of recent months. Farmers' prices are not likely to change much, on the average, during the next 2 months. They are bolstered by favorable consumer income and generally stable business activity.

Prices Received, Higher; Prices Paid, Lower

Prices received by farmers rose 2 index points, mid-January to mid-February...second consecutive similar rise. Prices paid by farmers (including interest, taxes, and wage rates) went down 1 index point. February prices received index was down from a year ago by 7 percent; prices paid, down about 2 percent from year ago.

Rise in prices received index from January to February was due mainly to higher prices for hogs, beef cattle, veal calves, lambs and cotton. The small drop in prices paid was due to lower prices for feed, clothing and farm supplies.

Farm Employment Down a Little From Year Ago

Total U. S. farm employment in February was down 1 percent from February last year. Number at work was 8,322,000 compared with 8,370,000 year ago. 7,011,000 were farm family workers; hired workers 1,311,000. Total civilian employment in February (census) was 57 million compared with 56.9 in January. February last year, 57.2.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE		
INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	Feb. 1950
Prices received by farmers	1910-14= 100	237
Prices paid by farmers, interest, taxes, and farm wage rates....	1910-14= 100	248
Parity ratio	1910-14= 100	96
Wholesale prices of food	1910-14= 100	243
Retail prices of food	1910-14= 100	253
Farm wage rates	1910-14= 100	429
Weekly factory earnings	1910-14= 100	490
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Feb. 1949	Jan.-Feb. 1950
Milk, (Bil. lb.)	17.1	17.7
Eggs, (Bil.)	9.4	10.4
Beef, (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)	4/ 596	4/ 592
Lamb & Mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) ..	4/ 56	4/ 51
Pork & Lard (Mil. lb.)	4/ 1,053	4/ 1,099
All meats (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)	4/ 1,757	4/ 1,793
1/ Week ended nearest 15th of month.		
2/ January figure.		
3/ January adjusted for seasonal variation.		
4/ January under Federal inspection.		